

# ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE

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Senator Gary Stevens

## SENATE BILL 32 *Middle Colleges*

### SPONSOR STATEMENT

Senate Bill 32 establishes a Middle College Program in Alaska. A type of dual credit system, Middle Colleges are partnerships between school districts and colleges. They offer a focused curriculum, increasing the viability of students from all economic backgrounds to earn college credits while still in high school.

The bill requires the University of Alaska (UA) and school districts to participate in the Middle College Program and affirms that program participants are considered full-time students of the district in which they are enrolled, as well as actively pursuing credit toward a college degree or certificate.

SB 32 also establishes criteria for student enrollment in the Middle College program, including the requirement that a student be enrolled in an Alaskan public school and has completed the 8th grade. Additionally, SB 32 requires a yearly report to the legislature summarizing student participation; course offerings; and the total number of credits earned.

Middle College Programs have been operating nationally for over twenty-five years to much acclaim. In Alaska, several School Districts are also now participating or developing middle college programs of their own, in collaboration with the University of Alaska. This bill would codify those efforts and provide a framework to scale up the programs, opening up middle college opportunities for more students throughout the state.

Thank you for your consideration of this important piece of legislation.